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**CHICO MAN PLEAD GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHILD
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION CHARGES**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that 30-year old MICHAEL ISHAQ of Chico, California, pleaded guilty yesterday, September 2, 2004 to a charge he transported and aided and abetted the transportation of a minor from Illinois to California for the purpose of engaging in unlawful sexual conduct. The guilty plea was entered before Senior United States District Court Judge Lawrence K. Karlton.

This case was the product of a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Chico Police Department, and the Shorewood, Illinois Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Laurel D. White, the investigation began in late June of this year when police from Shorewood, Illinois contacted the FBI in Sacramento to report a missing 15-year old girl. The parents of the 15-year old had discovered that their daughter was communicating via the internet with ISHAQ who lived in Chico, and that e-mails on the girl's computer revealed that ISHAQ had facilitated her travel to Sacramento by purchasing her airline ticket. The evidence showed that the 15-year old minor flew to Sacramento from Illinois on June 23, and that ISHAQ met her at the airport. He then drove her to his Chico apartment where the two engaged in sexual activity. The minor told FBI agents that during her 5-day stay in California, she engaged in multiple sex acts with ISHAQ, who she said had photographed their sexual encounters. She said she had met ISHAQ on an internet chat room called "planetteen.com" when she was 12 years old and had communicated with him via the internet ever since. She said ISHAQ knew she was 15 at the time of her travel to Sacramento in June of this year.

Sentencing has been scheduled for November 30th. ISHAQ faces a 5-year mandatory minimum, to 30-year maximum term of imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, a possible life term of supervised release and a \$100 statutory assessment.

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